



October 3, 2019
Commission Board Meeting
Student Union, Lord Fairfax Community College
131 Garland Snapp Drive, Middletown, VA 22645

Commissioners in Attendance: Matthew Conrad, Abigail Gomez, Asa Jackson, Terry Buntrock, Robert Goudie, Dena Jennings, Jan Monroe, Michael Markley, Sushmita Mazumdar, Laurie Naismith, Amanda Pillion, and David Trinkle

Staff in Attendance: Janet Starke, Cathy Welborn

Not in Attendance: Barbara Parker

Special Guests:

- Ed Harvey, President of Virginians for the Arts
- Cynthia Norwood, Sr. Assistant Attorney General, Commonwealth of Virginia
- Richard Follett, Poet Laureate, Town of Strasburg
- Michelle Bixler, Community Development Manager, Town of Strasburg
- Daniel Stover, Founder and Executive Director, Staufferstadt Arts

Chairman Matt Conrad called the meeting to order at 9 AM, and welcomed the new commissioners and introduced new officers. Janet Starke stated that Johnson Childress is retiring, and that a new Deputy Director, Lucas Hall, has been appointed. Lucas will begin October 30.

Presentation from the Town of Strasburg:

- Richard Follett, Poet Laureate, Town of Strasburg
- Michelle Bixler, Community Development Manager, Town of Strasburg
- Daniel Stover, Founder and Executive Director, Staufferstadt Arts

Matt Conrad called for the approval of minutes of the June 10, 2019 Commission meeting. Laurie Naismith made a motion to approve the minutes, Dave Trinkle seconded. All approved.

Janet Starke introduced Cindy Norwood, from the Office of the Attorney General who gave an overview of FOIA/COIA Requirements. If any Commissioners have questions about ethics and conflicts of interest, Janet Starke and Matt Conrad will gather questions for the Ethics Committee for clarity.

Janet Starke gave a report on the following:

- **NASAA Boot Camp/Leadership Institute** attended by Janet Starke, Matt Conrad and Abigail Gómez. Matt stated that it was wonderful to connect with people addressing the same policy and budget concerns. He would like to see greater alliance with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, better contact with the Secretary of Commerce, paying a stipend to panelists, and review of best practices for multi-year grants. Abigail Gomez stated that recognition of indigenous tribal communities and lands (as was demonstrated at the Institute) is an important topic of discussion. Janet reported that NASAA and NEA have suggested they will work to host an audit training for State Arts Agency (SAA) Leadership in the year ahead.

- **Update on the Budget / Foundation, Budget Process and Next GA**
Janet reviewed the FY2020 budget, particularly for new Commissioners, as was approved by Commissioners in June with some final year-end adjustments. She stressed the important relationship between NASAA and the VCA, the importance of the data it collects and its advocacy efforts at the national level on behalf of the Commission. Robert Goudie asked about surplus and deficit. Janet stated that the agency can never carry a deficit, but will—from time to time—carry over surplus.
- **Priority Items Ahead**
Janet gave a brief overview of the Creative Forces Initiative. By February, VCA aims to complete an asset mapping of network services for active service, veterans, and veteran families.

2020-2021 (FY2021) Funding Guideline Revisions

Janet Starke discussed proposed changes to the Guidelines for FY21 (highlighted in Red). She spoke to lifelong learning for adults, and whether it should be listed under AIE and/or Project Grants. She spoke to the evolving body of work and guidelines for IDEA. She reminded everyone that the National Endowment for the Arts has new logo, and should no longer be referred to as the NEA. The Guidelines now more clearly state that all grants are ONLINE. The draft Guidelines will go out for Public Comment (for 30 days) following this meeting, and be voted on by the Commission at the December 12, 2019 meeting.

FY2020 Bridge Strategic Plan

Janet Starke gave an overview of the Bridge Plan (approved by the Board in June 2019) as we work toward the 2021-2024 plan.

Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Janet Starke stated that we are approximately three quarters of the way through the Town Hall meetings. Meeting locations can be found on the website under Strategic Planning. Town Halls will be concluded by the first week of November. The facilitator will present findings and feedback at the December 2019 meeting. Committee work sessions will begin based on themes generated from the Town Hall meetings. Committees will meet and give input to the plan via conference calls and email. The new strategic plan will be open for commentary beginning at the ArtWorks Conference through the March Commission meeting. The new strategic plan will be voted on at the June 2020 Commission meeting. Janet noted that the Town Halls have had diverse attendance.

FY21 Performing Arts Tour Directory

Terry Buntrock attended the panel on September 12. She stated she enjoyed the process and came away feeling that the state of the arts is strong. She stated that the panel was made up of a diverse group of highly knowledgeable and well-prepared artists and arts leaders who represented a variety of performing arts fields. The panel consensus vote helped to streamline the large amount of work which allowed time more in depth review of the new artist applicants and those returning artists that needed more discussion. There were three times where the panel was divided. David Trinkle made a motion to approve the tour roster, as presented, for FY21; and Michael Markley seconded. All approved.

Reports

- A. **Budget Request Update:** Janet Starke stated that the VCA budget request is \$1 per capita, in alignment with an articulated Administration goal within the current budget bill. VCA is building awareness with the Senate and House Finance Committees. The current state appropriation is \$3.8 million. The actual current Virginia population is 8.5 million. The Senate budget staff

asked VCA to look at last census data of 8.1 million. The budget request includes a request for internal infrastructure to include one more program staff person. VCA ranks last in per capita funding compared to its neighboring states. Staffing, per grant, is also the lowest. Among other things, the request includes funding to support the development of fellowships for arts administrators of color. Matt Conrad asked Janet to put priority bullet points together for Commissioners for the December meeting. Matt said that we should ask to use the American Community Survey used by localities to estimate population between each census.

B. Virginians for the Arts Update

Chair, Ed Harvey said the entire legislature is up for election. Once the election is over, VFTA will be ready to meet with new legislators. Ed stated that he thinks this is a good time to go for the full ask of \$1 per capita. VFTA and McGuireWoods staff have put together a comprehensive plan for engagement with the legislators. It will be a busy year.

C. 2020 ArtWorks for Virginia Conference

ArtWorks will be held on January 29, 2020 at the Hilton Short Pump, and Arts Advocacy Day will take place on January 30, 2020. The theme this year will be “Arts and Social Impact.” The Keynote will be Bryan Doerries. Bryan is from Newport News and now lives in NYC. His company, Theatre of War Productions, goes into communities, assesses the needs/challenges and then creates an original theatrical work using Greek tragedies, other theater works, music, and local arts groups to address and engage the community.

D. Artist Fellowships Update

Janet reported that the Artist Fellowship Panel is scheduled to take place November 18, 2019, and Casey is working to process final applications (which were due the day prior to this meeting), and prepare for Panels.

E. Arts in Education

In Casey’s absence, Janet reported that the Artist Fellowship application process had just closed (October 1), and that Casey is quickly working to turn those, and teaching artist roster applications around, to be paneled in November (November 18 for Artist Fellowships and November 25 for Teaching Artist Roster). Casey also continues to accept registrations from high schools across the state, to participate in Poetry Out Loud, the national finals of which will take place in the spring at The Kennedy Center, in Washington, DC

Abigail Gomez gave an update on the Cultural Equity Work Session, and introduced special guests who gave a brief workshop on “Proper Pronouns”.

Special Guests: Victoria Leigh Kidd, MBA, CPRW, CPCC. Alistair Bingham spoke to his experience with gender identity. Dena Jennings asked how our policies would help. The speakers stated that a policy should include an openness statement in IDEA. A possible change could include eliminating all pronouns in Cultural Equity / policy statements to include” them” or title of staff position.

**Working Lunch: Committee Work
Committees Report Out**

Policy, Planning and Procedures Committee: Amanda Pillion, Matt Conrad (ex-officio member of all Committees), Mike Markley, Dena Jennings: Goals include:

1. Evaluate and develop recommendations for revising the bylaws
2. Create a "cheat sheet" for Commissioner roles and responsibilities

3. Evaluate the program structure to: (1) examine the organization to best accomplish mission, and (2) evaluate options for more effective grant cycles and methods

Next Meeting Nov 15th at 2PM.

Education Committee: Sushmita Mazumdar, Barbara Parker, and Terry Buntrock. As the Committee primarily engages in Artists in Education, AIEEx, and Teaching Artist Roster, goals were identified as: current focus is primarily on Pre-K-12, but finding a need to more consistently articulate commitment to lifelong learning—veterans, seniors, immigrants, people with trauma, veterans, people with disabilities, etc. Goals include determining the effectiveness of current programs and how to address needs of both Pre-K-12 and lifelong learning.

Special Committees: Jan Monroe, David Trinkle, and Laurie Naismith. Goals include: to review language, and who we are serving (special needs, veterans, seniors). Also, mapping needs and resources in the state for special constituencies and diversifying special constituencies across the state.

IDEA Committee: Abi Gómez, Asa Jackson, Robert Goudie, and Sushmita Mazumdar. The committee will look at VCA Bylaws to create an official standing committee. Work will involve the budget and policy committee. Top initiatives include reviewing the Policy Manual and Guidelines, for language to include IDEA. How to impress upon grantees that boards need to reflect community they serve. How can we help organizations develop holistic approaches for more inclusive boards, staff, and audiences?

Old Business: None

New Business: Dave Trinkle will send a formal email regarding the Roanoke Arts Economic Impact meeting October 10.

Upcoming Meetings: The next meeting of the Commission will be December 11-12, 2019, in Williamsburg, Virginia

Laurie Naismith made a motion to adjourn. Dave Trinkle seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1PM.